

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 12-32 were allowed, claims 3-9, 11 and 45 were objected to, and claims 1, 2, 10, 33-44 and 46 were rejected. Applicants thank the Examiner for allowing claims 12-32 and for indicating the allowability of claims 3-9, 11 and 45. Allowable dependent claims 4 and 45 have been placed into independent form by incorporating the language of the claims from which they depend. Those claims, along with their dependent claims, should be a condition for allowance.

By this Reply and Amendment, claims 2, 4, 10, 11, 33, 37, 43, 45 and 46 have been amended, claims 1, 38, 42 and 44 have been canceled without prejudice, and claims 2-37, 39-41, 43, 45 and 46 remain pending in the present application. All claim amendments are fully supported throughout the written description and figures of the specification.

Claims 1, 2, 10, 33-44 and 46 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as anticipated by the Purkis et al. reference, US Patent No.: 6,567,013. Although Applicants disagree with aspects of the rejection, various amendments have been made to the claims to facilitate allowance of the present application.

Specifically, independent claim 1 has been canceled without prejudice, and the language of claim 1 has been incorporated into allowable, dependent claim 4. Claims 2-3 and 5-11 all ultimately depend from newly independent claim 4. Similarly, dependent claim 45 has been amended in a manner that is believed to incorporate the substance of all elements of dependent claim 44 and independent claim 42 from which it depends. Independent claim 42 has been canceled without prejudice. Remaining dependent claims 43 and 46 depend from newly independent claim 45. Additionally, independent claim 33 has been amended to incorporate the language of original dependent claim 4, and claim 33 along with its dependent claims also are believed to be in condition for allowance.

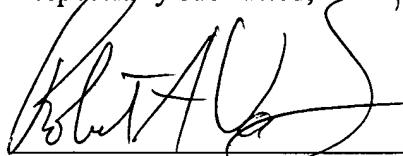
With respect to independent claim 37, amendments have been made to incorporate the language of original dependent claim 38. In the Office Action, claim 38 was rejected based on

the Purkis et al. reference, and the Examiner stated the Purkis et al. reference discloses a plurality of crossovers (D, E) disposed between two decoders of the plurality of decoders. However, Applicants disagree and respectfully submit the Purkis et al. reference describes embodiments incorporating additional hydraulic lines D. and E, however the system does not utilize a "crossover" as described in the present application and recited in amended, independent claim 37. Accordingly, claim 37 along with its dependent claims are believed patentably distinguishable over the cited reference.

As referenced above, the many dependent claims are patentably distinguishable for the reasons provided with respect to the corresponding independent claims from which they depend. However, the subject dependent claims also are patentable for the unique subject matter recited in those dependent claims.

In view of the foregoing remarks, the pending claims are believed patentable over the cited references. However, if the Examiner believes certain amendments are necessary to clarify the present claims or if the Examiner wishes to resolve other issues by way of a telephone conference, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,



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